# THE Scranton Plan

Mining Town Licks Its Slump:

New Industries Replace

Vanishing Coal

(Reprinted by special permission, from Wall Street Journal of March 31, 1949) (By Michael J. Saada).

SCRANTON, PA.- Citizens here have proved a recession hit city can pull itself up by its bootstraps.

Back in 1945, when the rest of the country was riding a boom, they heard this harsh warning from the men running their area's principal industry:

"By 1960 anthracite mining will be only a memory to the people of the Lackawanna Valley." That was an understatement, if anything, for coal veins were already running thin.

But instead of letting Scranton become another mining ghost town, a program of new industrialization was begun. Called the "Scranton Plan," it involved building plants and offering them to out-of-town industries at low rentals. Funds for the new factories came from bond issues subscribed to by the townfolk. A campaign to lure other capital into the area was launched.

Three years later, the "Plan" has chalked up these results: Some 15 community-financed plants have been built and are occupied by twelve outside industries. Another 16 factories have been constructed by private capital.Coal miners have become shoemakers, carpenters, textile weavers and cigar makers. Other unemployed diggers have found work in producing building materials, women's and children's wear, household fixtures and auto batteries.

**New Industries on the Scene**

General Electric Co. quadrupled its automatic dishwashers production last year compared with 1946, the first year of operation in Scranton, says N. C. Mulcock, plant manager. The company plans to hike plant space to 210,000 square feet from 'an original 109,000 square feet.

W. L. Douglas Shoe Co., of Brockton, Mass., is turning out men's Footwear in a leased shoe factory. Kitchen sinks and bathtubs are rolling out of Detroit's Murray Corp. unit here. Waitt & Bond, Inc., of Newark, N. J. is making "Blackstone" cigars at the rate of 250,000 a day.

The Trane Co. of Lacrosse, Wis., producer of convector heaters, hopes "to broaden our line of products made here."

Employment in Lackawanna County, of which Scranton is the seat, rose a hefty 43% from 1946 to a peak of 104,500 last October, since then there has been a drop of about 4% to around 100,000. Approximately 70% of county employment is in Scranton proper.

In the early '30's coal mines around Scranton employed 40,000 men; a bare 10,000 are working in them today. Those in Lackawanna Valley have been wearing thin since the mid-30's. Jermyn, Jessup and Archbald in the Valley have already become ghost towns.

**Thinning Veins**

A prominent mining engineer and executive of a big operating firm sums up the local mining outlook:

"Veins in the extreme northern region of Pennsylvania's anthracite fields (the Scranton area) are much shallower than those farther south. We have gone about as far as we can at many collieries without weakening the coal chamber pillars which support the surface and prevent cave-ins. Mining here will continue to decline each year. In about ten years hard coal will be all washed up in Lackawanna County."

Scranton thus was in a recession when nearly every town and hamlet in the country was prospering, back in January, 1946. Unemployment had spiraled to 29,500 immediately after the war, from 6,500 in 1944, according to Alexander J. Kornish, manager of the local Pennsylvania State Employment Service, "and it was rapidly returning to the 40,000 peak of 1939." Something had to be done—quickly.

First the Chamber of Commerce bought the government - owned Murray Corp. war plant (it made bomber wings) for $1,200,000. It set up an affiliate—the Scranton Plan Corp.—to raise money through the sale of first mortgage 4% bonds to the town's citizens.

So successful was this campaign —$1,700,000 poured into the till—the Chamber formed another affiliate, the Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Co., to market debentures locally and use the proceeds for constructing new factory buildings.

**"Jobs-for-Men" Bonds**

Two additional "Jobs-for-men" bond selling drives have jacked up the total of outstanding securities to $2,721,800 owned by over 5,000 investors. A unique feature in Scranton Lackawanna Industrial's setup is a clause binding it to lease plants to firms which will largely employ out-of-work miners.

No one in Scranton can say just who was responsible for this scheme of building and financing plants, then offering them to outside industries at low rentals. Some say it was Ralph E. Weeks, head of International Textbook Co. and its subsidiary, International Correspondence Schools. I.C.S. has been a Scranton fixture for years.

Others give credit to Ray Stauffer, Chevrolet dealer and chairman of the city's new Industries Committee, who personally built and financed an auto parts plant, then leased it to General Motors Corp.

When the "Plan" began to roll, unemployed members of Murray's United Auto Workers' local bought and peddled bonds to finance the company plant. The union also permitted Murray to drive a hard bargain before signing a lease to make peacetime goods; it can break the lease without obligation in the event of labor trouble.

Scranton Lackawanna Industrial is the backbone of Scranton's industrialization program. It owns 11 plants ranging from 30,000 to 117,000 square feet, all occupied, for which the company spent an estimated $2,046,350. The Scranton Plan Corp. owns the 500,000-square foot Murray plant now appraised at $3,500,000.

Still another local Chamber of Commerce affiliate, Scranton Industrial Development Co., was formed early in the program. This firm now owns three plants costing approximately $660,907 and appraised at $913,875.

**How It Works**

The Scranton "Plan" works something like this:

The Scranton Chamber of Commerce "scouts" industries which are considering setting up new manufacturing plants. This missionary work is financed by a $25,000 fund raised each year through contributions by Commerce members.

After a company is "sold" on locating in the area, it selects a site from property owned by Scranton Lackawanna Industrial, specifies the floor space required and submits a blueprint of the desired building. "We can deliver a completed plant in less than three months," explains Martin P. Kennedy, Chamber president.

Scranton Lackawanna Industrial underwrites the entire cost of construction, except equipment and wiring. It then leases the plant to the manufacturer at an annual rental of 50 to 55 cents a square foot. This is less than half the average asking price of factory space in Philadelphia, the nearest large industrial area.

Rent includes 4% interest on the money borrowed to build, tax charges based on lower-than-going assessments, insurance costs and amortization of the facilities. A tenant has the option to buy during life of the lease (usually 15 years) at original cost, less amortization. If options aren't exercised, the buildings become community-owned properties upon full amortization.

Plants are all alike: Single floor, concrete foundations and floors, steel frames, cinder block walls and concrete slab roofs. A Scranton bank group, comprising nine members of the clearing house, advances up to 50% of the cost, according to Frank Stemple, executive vice president of the First National Bank here. Scranton Lackawanna Industrial shoulders the balance from its working capital and from additional sales of debentures. The nine banks have advanced $610,000 in first mortgages on plant property so far.

**Any "Bugs"?**

What are drawbacks in the "plan"? Enthusiastic Scrantonians say there aren't any. But evidence of "growing pains" is showing up in spots. For one thing, there is a limit to how much local capital can be raised to finance new enterprises.

This was indicated last week when the Chamber of Commerce obtained a five-year loan of $87,000 from the Reconstruction Corp. on a plant to be occupied by one of the country's largest showcase manufacturers—the Mayflower Showcase Co.

Under R.F.C. regulations, the government agency won't lend money to finance private enterprises until all avenues of private financing have been exhausted. Scranton Lackawanna Industrial raised funds through debentures for use in constructing the showcase plant, and the bank pool made an advance, but the combined amount fell short of the amount needed.

Surrounding towns have patterned programs to attract industries along Scranton's "plan." Among them are Moosic, Pittston, Forest City and Archibald. Within the past five months details of the "plan" have been sought by Chambers of Commerce in Tulsa, Okla.,Newburyport and Brockton, Mass., Hannibal, Mo., Omaha, Sumter, S. C., Williamsport, Pa. and by Mayor W. McKee Kelley, of St. Petersburg, Fla.

What about the future? Commerce Chamber Secretary Jones says: "We have an excellent chance of acquiring one, and maybe two, new industries in the near future." He estimates annual payrolls of community - sponsored plants at $7,696,000 and "they will be $15,280,000 when and if potential peak employment is realized."

## LAWN STUDIES STARTED AT TECH

Lawn studies, more complete than any herefore conducted in Virginia, are beginning at V. P. I.'s Experiment Station.

Horticulturalist A. G. Smith, Jr., project leader, says the main aims of the research are: to compare the effects of different fertilizer mixtures, with and without lime; to determine the comparative value of fall and spring seedings of grasses; and to study the effect of mowing on blue grass.

The researchers also will test various methods of weed control.

To conduct the study, 64 lawn plots, each 10 by 10 feet, have been seeded. Sixteen different treatments are included.

Southern Baptist Convention being held in Oklahoma City.

Thomas E. Dewey and family are touring Europe.

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SCRIPTURE: Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22: 7-23.
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## The Lord's Supper

Lesson for May 22, 1949

LET US CLEAR UP some very common misunderstandings of what the Christian religion is. Some (both enemies and friends) think it consists in turning one's back on the world, living in a sort of happy wonderland where the evil of the world is altogether shut out and forgotten. Another notion is that Christianity presents an angry God (or one who can very easily be made angry) laying down the law to mankind. Another is that Christianity is a purely individual affair. And still another is that Christian religion consists of the teachings of Jesus and that is all it is. Every one of these misunderstandings vanishes in the light that shines around the Lord's Supper.

Dr. Foreman

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**Betrayal**

PEOPLE SOMETIMES think that religion shuts men's eyes to the ugly realities of life. Some religions try to do so; but not the religion of Christ. He knew the kind of world this is; he never let his disciples forget it.

**On that last night, dark forces were abroad. Jesus' enemies were closing in on him. One of his own circle would betray him. Yet it was in that sort of atmosphere, heavy with betrayal and hatred, that Jesus began this sacrament of faith, hope and love.**

The true Christian does not live in a fool's paradise, he does not imagine that everything is lovely in the nicest possible words. The sacrament which is the heart of his worship is itself a reminder of the ugliness of the world which man's sin creates.

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**Blessing**

"AND HE BLESSED the bread . . ." If Christianity consisted mainly of condemning wickedness and denouncing sinners, then at the center of our worship we would have some symbol of dread and awe, like fire and brimstone, a consuming flame.

**But no—at the heart of our worship is a thing as simple, plain and friendly as a loaf of bread, bread on which the blessing of God has been asked. Blessing, not cursing; invitation, not threatening, is at the heart of our religion.**

Whenever you see some one whose chief idea of being a "good Christian" is going around proclaiming the meanness of the world, cursing at everybody and everything.

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**Breaking**

"AND BROKE IT, and gave . . ." Artists have tried in a single picture to express the meaning of Christianity. Some of the pictures are beautiful, but many of them miss an important truth. What shall it be? A picture of a shipwrecked woman clinging to a rock? Of a saint praying in a long solitary vigil? These leave out something vital. For Christianity is a fellowship. No Christian is complete by himself.

**At the heart of our religion is a Communion. Few if any Protestant churches allow any one even a minister, to give the Holy Communion to himself, by himself.**

The true Christian never finds himself, his true self, alone; only in fellowship. A Christian belongs with other Christians as much as one coal in a bed of coals belongs with all the rest.

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**Blood**

JESUS TEACHINGS are so important, so full of wisdom and of living power, that often some one will say that Jesus was a teacher and only a teacher, and that following his teachings is all that Christianity is. Jesus did not think of it in this way.

**True, his teaching is of the utmost importance; but that was not and is not all. As Middleton Murry said years ago, Jesus was the only teacher who has died for his teaching. But he did more than that: he died for those he taught.**

The cup at the Holy Communion reminds every one who partakes of it that Christ was not only a teacher, he was a sacrifice.

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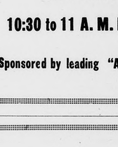

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## Rocks News

Rocks, May 16.- Farmers were busy planting corn last week.

Friends are sorry to hear that Mrs. Allen Franklin is not so well.

Quite a few from Rocks went to Evergreen several nights last week to hear the Rev. Omah Burnette.

Samuel Dickerson missed several days from school last week because of the croup.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Anderson spent a few days here last week before going to Kansas.

William Ranson celebrated his 12th birthday Saturday.

Quite a few from Rocks attended the funeral of Bob Harvey Tuesday afternoon at Evergreen.

Little Katherine Ranson has the measles.

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Moore and daughter, of Montgomery, W. Va., are spending quite a while here with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Anderson.

Mrs. John Williams, of Cullen, and Mr. and Mrs. Wiley Richardson of Pamplin were attending Sunday School and preaching at Rocks on Sunday.

The Rev. and Mrs. C. G. Carter were dinner guests Sunday of Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Anderson.

Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Dickerson were dinner guests of Cassie Baldwin Sunday.

Danny Dickerson spent awhile with Samuel Dickerson Sunday.

Friends are sorry to hear that Mrs. Richard Inge, of Farmville, is on the sick list.

A. J. Hardy is some better at this writing. Also Mrs. Hardy.

Sandra Ruth Roach celebrated her 12th birthday today.

## Trinity Road

Trinity Road, May 17.- The one-hundredth (100th) anniversary of Hebron Baptist Church will be celebrated on the Fifth Sunday, May 29. All former pastors have been invited to attend.

The revival will begin at Hebron Church June 6, conducted by the pastor, Rev. G. E. Hughes.

Rev. Twyman Williams, of Appomattox filled his regular appointment at Stonewall Presbyterian Church last Sunday. He was a dinner guest of Mr. R. C. Wright and family.

The Rev. Hughes preached a fine sermon on the topic, "Mother," at Hebron Church Sunday night. The congregation was small, due to the storm.

The prayer meeting will be held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Burnette this Wednesday night.

Mrs. Addie Routon is on the sick list.

Listen! Wedding bells will soon be ringing!

Miss Jean Stratton and Mr. Gerald Maxey attended the final dance at Lynchburg College on Saturday night.

Mrs. C. M. Stratton and Mrs. C. M. Caldwell were in Thaxton last Tuesday to attend a Methodist Conference.

Mrs. Lula Taylor was a Sunday guest of her daughter, Mrs. B. D. Straitfin.

Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Scruggs, of Concord and Mrs. Haywood Crank and little daughter, Jo Ann, of Florida were dinner guests Sunday in the home of R. C. Wright.

Mr. and Mrs. Hunter Paris and family, of Lynchburg were Sunday supper guests of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Parris.

West European self support held to be far-off yet.

United Nations refuses to ease Franco ban.

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## Locust Grove

Locust Grove, May 17.- Friends are glad to see Harold Hatcher getting along so nicely.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Hamilton, Mrs. Percy Thompson, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Robertson and son, all spent the week-end with Mrs. Tom Robertson.

Those visiting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Beale for the week-end were Mr. and Mrs. James Beale and daughter, Mrs. Ida Beale, of Lynchburg; Jim Megginson, of Norfolk; Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Beale and sons, and Wesley Beale, of Pamplin.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennie Beale and daughter; Everette Beale, and Ben Megginson and Mrs. Nathalie Robertson spent Wednesday night with Mrs. Lula Beale.

Mr. and Mrs. Willie Beale and son, Walker were guests Monday night until bedtime of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Garrette.

We are glad to hear that little Joe Megginson, Jr. is getting along nicely after several day's sickness.

Mrs. Mattie Coleman and son, Clyde spent last Sunday with Mrs. J. K. Megginson.

Decline in prices would not necessarily mean a depression, say expert economists.

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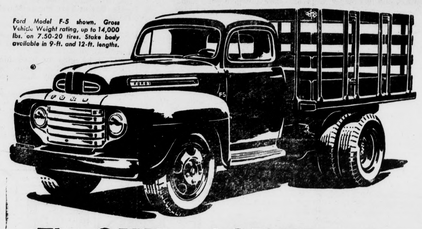
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